



The
Real You
at **Work**

COMMUNICATING AUTHENTIC INCLUSION

Talking Points & Sample Language for Employers Committed to Trans &
Non-Binary Inclusion

Principles · Sample Language · What to Avoid

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How to Use This Guide

Trans and non-binary candidates are increasingly savvy about the difference between inclusion language that's backed by real policy and language that's just marketing. This guide is meant to help you talk about your company's commitment in a way that's specific, credible, and honest — because vague or overstated claims tend to backfire, while specific and true ones build real trust.

A simple rule underlies everything here: only say what you can back up. Every talking point in this guide assumes the underlying policy, benefit, or practice actually exists at your company. If it doesn't yet, that's a roadmap for what to build next — not language to borrow early.

- Part 1 — Principles: What makes inclusion messaging credible instead of performative.
- Part 2 — Where to Use This Language: Career pages, job postings, benefits materials, and beyond.
- Part 3 — Sample Language: Ready-to-adapt talking points by category.
- Part 4 — What to Avoid: Common language pitfalls that undermine trust.

A note on substance before language

- This guide assumes the foundational work is already in place — clear policy, reviewed benefits, and trained managers.
- If you're still building that foundation, see our companion Employer's Roadmap for the underlying policy and process work first.
- Language should describe what's true, not aspirational — candidates and employees will notice the gap quickly if it isn't.

PART 1

Principles of Credible Inclusion Messaging

What separates language people trust from language that reads as marketing.

1. Be Specific, Not Just Aspirational

- Replace generic phrases like "we value diversity" with a specific, verifiable statement of what you actually do.
- Name the actual benefit, policy, or practice rather than gesturing at a value in the abstract.
- If a claim can't be followed by a concrete example, rewrite it until it can.

2. Only Say What's True

- Every talking point in this guide should map to a real, current policy or practice at your company.
- Don't describe benefits, processes, or protections that are still "in progress" as if they're already in place.
- If a policy changes, update the language promptly — stale claims erode trust fast once noticed.

3. Show Up Consistently, Not Seasonally

- Spread inclusion-related content across the year rather than concentrating it in June.
- Make sure internal practice (how employees are actually treated) matches external messaging year-round.
- Avoid one-off statements with no follow-through — a single post or press release isn't a strategy.

4. Let Specifics and Examples Do the Talking

- Use concrete details (what's covered, what process exists, who's involved) instead of adjectives like "inclusive" or "welcoming" on their own.
- Where possible and with permission, use real (anonymized if needed) examples of how the company has supported an employee.
- Favor plain, direct language over buzzwords that could mean anything.

5. Write Your Own, Don't Borrow Wholesale

- Base your language on your own actual policies and practices, not another company's public statements.
- Involve people closest to the policy (HR, ERG leads, and — with consent — employees with lived experience) in reviewing the language before it's published.

PART 2

Where to Use This Language

The touchpoints where a candidate or employee is actually looking for these signals.

Candidate-Facing

- Careers page / "life at the company" page.
- Individual job postings — a specific inclusion line, not just a generic legal EEO clause.
- Interview process materials or talking points given to hiring managers and recruiters.
- Offer letters and benefits summaries.

Employee-Facing

- Employee handbook introduction and policy sections.
- New hire onboarding materials.
- Internal communications tied to policy updates or ERG activities.

Public-Facing

- Leadership bios, interviews, and public statements.
- Social media — spread across the year, tied to real activity rather than a single seasonal post.
- Company blog, annual reports, or DEI/impact reports, where applicable.

PART 3

Sample Language by Category

Starting points to adapt — only use what's actually true for your company.

Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination

Sample language

- "Our non-discrimination policy explicitly protects gender identity and gender expression, and applies to every stage of employment — from hiring through promotion."
- "We review our equal opportunity policy annually with employment counsel to ensure it reflects current protections."

Healthcare & Benefits

Sample language

- "Our health plan includes coverage for gender-affirming care, including [name specific categories: hormone therapy, surgical care, mental health support]."
- "Our Employee Assistance Program includes access to counselors experienced in gender-affirming care."

Name, Pronoun & Systems Support

Sample language

- "Employees can update their chosen name and pronouns across email, directory, and internal systems through a dedicated HR process, independent of any legal name change."
- "Pronouns are a standard, optional field in our email signatures and internal directory for any employee who chooses to share them."

Community & Employee Resource Groups

Sample language

- "Our LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group is executive-sponsored, has a dedicated budget, and meets [cadence], with programming that runs throughout the year."
- "Employees can connect with our ERG during onboarding, and participation is always optional."

Leadership Commitment

Sample language

- "Our leadership team receives regular training on gender identity inclusion, and [Name/Title] serves as executive sponsor for our LGBTQ+ ERG."
- "We report on representation and inclusion progress to our leadership team on a [quarterly/annual] basis."

Job Postings

Sample language

· "We welcome applicants of all gender identities and expressions, and our hiring process is designed to be respectful of every candidate's name and pronouns from the first conversation onward."

PART 4

What to Avoid

Common language pitfalls that undermine an otherwise genuine commitment.

Language Pitfalls

- Vague slogans with no specifics behind them ("we celebrate diversity" with nothing to point to).
- Rainbow branding or Pride-month posts with no corresponding policy, benefit, or year-round activity.
- Overstating coverage or protections that don't actually exist yet in policy.
- Copy-pasting language from another company's public materials rather than describing your own practice.
- Coded language (e.g., "family values," "traditional culture fit") used in place of explicit, direct inclusion statements.
- Featuring diversity prominently in external marketing while leadership and senior roles remain non-diverse.
- Publishing a statement once and never revisiting or updating it as policy or practice changes.
- Responding defensively, rather than substantively, when a candidate or employee asks a direct question about these claims.

If a candidate could ask a specific follow-up question about any claim and your team couldn't answer it clearly, that claim needs more work before it's published.

A Final Note

The goal of this guide isn't to help you sound inclusive — it's to help you accurately describe an inclusive workplace you've actually built. Trans and non-binary candidates are reading closely, comparing notes, and remembering who followed through.

Get the substance right first. The language in this guide will always ring true when it's simply describing what's already there.

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